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National Indian Health Board  
**NATIONAL TRIBAL  
COVID-19 RESPONSE**

910 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE | Washington, D.C. 20003 | 202-507-4070 | [www.nihb.org](http://www.nihb.org)

The National Indian Health Board is committed to ensuring that the Tribes remain informed on COVID-19 and have the resources and assistance needed to respond to the pandemic. This newsletter will contain the latest resources, announcements and information on scheduled calls and webinars.

To view all of our resources, please be sure to visit our COVID-19 Tribal Resource Center at [www.nihb.org/covid-19](http://www.nihb.org/covid-19).

Tuesday, August 18, 2020

[www.nihb.org/covid-19](http://www.nihb.org/covid-19)

**NIHB COVID-19 Tribal  
Resource Center**

- Funding Opportunities and Technical Assistance **Resources**
- Administration and Agency **Response**
- Community Health **Tools**
- Advocacy **Tools**
- **List** of Member and Partner Organizations to

**Pre-Application Webinar Today:  
NIHB Tribal School Readiness  
Mini-Grant**

- find regionally-specific resources
- Upcoming Calls Webinars and Events

## Indigenous Connectivity Summit October 5-9, 2020



Presented by Internet Society, the Indigenous Connectivity Summit brings together community network managers and operators, Indigenous-owned Internet service providers, community members, researchers, policy makers and Indigenous leaders. We discuss ways to ensure Alaska Native, American Indian, Inuit, Native Hawaiian, First Nations and Métis communities have affordable, high-quality and sustainable Internet access, and talk about how it can support social and economic development.

The Summit provides practical, hands-on training to help Indigenous communities connect to the Internet to and creates opportunities to build relationships and share useful knowledge and experience.

**Dates: October 5 - 9, 2020**  
**Register for the Summit.**  
*Deadline to Register for Pre-Summit Trainings is August 28, 2020*

## The National Indian Health Board

(NIHB) will hold an optional pre-application webinar

for the Tribal School Readiness Mini-Grant **today, August 18, 2020 at 3:30 PM Eastern Time.**

With funding from the Indian Health Service, NIHB is offering a funding opportunity for Tribes and Tribal Organizations seeking to strengthen school preparation and readiness for safe operations during the COVID pandemic. This funding is intended to fulfill immediate Tribal school readiness needs.

NIHB will provide mini-grants to a maximum of **15 Tribes or Tribal organizations in amounts up to \$2,000 each.** Tribes may use these funds for activities in one or more of these categories:

- Materials and Equipment Acquisition
- Facilities & Infrastructure
- Outreach and Education
- Training and Technical Assistance
- Evaluation and Assessment

The completed application is due by 11:59 PM EDT on Friday, August 28, 2020.

**National Indian Health Board**  
**NATIONAL TRIBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE**

**NIHB: Tribal School Readiness Mini-grant**  
**> Request for Applications <**

The National Indian Health Board (NIHB), with funding from the Indian Health Service, is pleased to offer up to **\$2,000 to Tribes and Tribal organizations** through its Tribal School Readiness Mini grant. Grants are intended to strengthen school preparation and readiness for safe operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Funds can be used for activities to support a learning environment that is safe for students, parents, teachers, and school employees. Grantees may use these funds for one or more of these categories:

- Materials and equipment acquisition
- Facilities and infrastructure
- Outreach and education
- Training and technical assistance
- Evaluation and assessment

For the complete funding announcement, workplan template, sample activities, and more information, please visit: <https://www.nihb.org/ncid-19/funding-opportunities/>

For the application, visit: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8KJLPH>

**Who is eligible?**  
 Applicants must be a federally recognized Tribe or Tribal organization as defined in the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, as amended.

**How to apply**  
 Submit an application package with a completed workplan (template available), letter of support from Tribe or Tribal official, and a copy of most recent audit, letter to governance or schedule of findings.

Completed applications are due on Friday, August 28, 2020 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

**Pre-Application Webinar**  
 NIHB is hosting an optional pre-application webinar to summarize the project's goals and provide a brief overview of the application process.

DATE: Tuesday, August 18, 2020  
 TIME: 3:30 PM Eastern Time  
 Register at: <https://bit.ly/32NCOU8>

For questions, contact Brett Weber at [bweber@nihb.org](mailto:bweber@nihb.org).

The project period will run from approximately September 1 through October 31, 2020.

**Optional Pre-Application Webinar**  
**Tuesday, August 18, 2020**  
**3:30 PM Eastern Time**  
**[Register for the Webinar.](#)**

Please contact Brett Weber at [bweber@nihb.org](mailto:bweber@nihb.org) with any questions.

## Call & Webinar Announcements

### COVID-19 in Indian Country: Past Policy, Current Responses, and Future Implications, Tuesday, August 18

The coronavirus pandemic has had a disproportionate impact on American Indian and Alaska Native communities. Leading up to this current crisis, many state and federal policies undercut Tribal sovereignty, leaving Tribal healthcare systems underfunded and ill-equipped to respond to the spread of COVID-19 in their communities. In response, Tribes have exercised their inherent sovereignty to implement a range of infection control measures, with community-led initiatives providing creative and nimble solutions to the evolving crisis. This webinar will introduce participants to key principles in Indian law and Tribal public health law, discuss the impact of COVID-19 in Indian Country, and identify response strategies based upon practical experience.



**Tuesday, August 18, 2020**  
**1:00 PM – 2:30 PM EST**  
**[Register for the Webinar](#)**

## **Strengthening Vaccine Confidence in Pediatric Offices During the COVID-19 Pandemic, Wednesday, August 19**

Pediatric vaccine ordering and administration have declined during the COVID-19 pandemic as parents have stayed home. Maintaining routine childhood immunization is essential in order to prevent outbreaks of preventable diseases. This webinar with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), will discuss strategies for ensuring safe well visits and building vaccine confidence among parents of young during the COVID-19 pandemic.



**Wednesday, August 19, 2020**  
**3:00 PM – 4:00 PM Eastern Time**  
[Register for the Webinar](#)

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## **Environmental Health: Air Pollution, COVID-19 & Health Disparities, Friday, August 21**

The National Institute for Health Care Management (NIHCM) Foundation is hosting a webinar on environmental health and COVID-19. Researchers in the US have suggested air pollution has significantly worsened the COVID-19 pandemic and potentially led to more deaths than if pollution-free skies were the norm. This webinar will explore how different neighborhoods in the same city can have vastly different air quality and what that means for their residents' short- and long-term health outcomes.

**Friday, August 21, 2020**  
**12:00 PM – 1:00 PM Eastern Time**  
[Register for the Webinar](#)

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## **Safe Learning for Kids Webinar, Tuesday, August 25**

Join the **Federal Emergency Management Agency** (FEMA) Region II National

Preparedness Division for a webinar on keeping children safe while they learn. As schools reopen with a virtual learning component, students are spending more time online and are vulnerable to cyber threats.

Guest speakers from the **Federal Trade Commission** (FTC) will discuss cybersecurity for children and tips on dealing with cyberbullying. A guest speaker from the **Administration for Children and Families** (ACF), a division of the Department of Health & Human Services, will discuss how to prepare children for returning to the classroom in a COVID-19 environment.



FEMA

**Tuesday, August 25, 2020**  
**12:00 PM - 01:00 PM Eastern Time**  
**[Register for the Webinar](#)**

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## **Department of Veterans' Affairs Virtual Tribal Consultation on Care Coordination, Tuesday, August 25, 2020**

Tribal leaders and Tribal health directors are invited to a virtual Tribal consultation hosted by the **Department of Veterans Affairs** (VA) focusing on care coordination for veterans receiving care under VA's Indian Health Service/Tribal Health Program (IHS/THP) Reimbursement Agreement Program (RAP). The virtual Tribal consultation session is on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, from 3:30–5:00 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time).

Participants are encouraged to interact by sharing comments/questions using the chat function during the presentation.

Tribal input and recommendations will help the VA in enhancing and improving its care coordination for AI/AN Veterans who use IHS/THP RAP, while ensuring VA upholds its responsibility to veterans healthcare. Find program information, including templates, provider guides, and fact sheets, at VA **Office of Community Care's website** and the **Office of Tribal Government Relations' website**.



Submit written comments to [tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov](mailto:tribalgovernmentconsultation@va.gov) before September 25, 2020, or by mail to Department of Veterans Affairs, Suite 915L, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. For questions, contact [Tribal.Agreements@va.gov](mailto:Tribal.Agreements@va.gov).

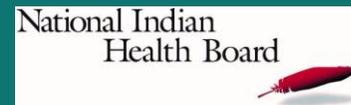
**Tuesday, August 25, 2020**  
**3:30–5:00 p.m. Eastern Time**  
**Call-in number: 1-800-767-1750; Extension: 85286**  
**[Join the Session](#)**

## Announcements

### NIHB Leads Efforts on Joint Letter to Congress Opposing Policy Changes to Medicaid FMAP

Tribal Nations and organizations encouraged to send their own letter - template available!

On July 27, the **National Indian Health Board** (NIHB) sent a joint letter to Congress firmly opposing any policy that would undo decades of precedent in federal Medicaid policy towards Tribal Nations by extending 100% Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) to States for Medicaid services rendered by providers outside the Indian health system to American Indians/Alaska Natives. This policy would seek to stabilize state Medicaid programs at the direct expense of the Indian health system, and runs contrary to federal trust and treaty obligations.



NIHB was joined by Tribal Nations, **National Congress of American Indians**, **National Council of Urban Indian Health**, and multiple regional Tribal organizations in this important advocacy. NIHB encourages all Tribal Nations and organizations to join us in showing that Indian Country is uniformly opposed to this provision by sending similar letters. Please find this **template letter** on NIHB's Tribal COVID-19 Resource Center. Read the joint letter **here**.

**FCC 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Window**  
**DEADLINE EXTENDED! Applications Now due**  
**Wednesday, September 2, 2020 at 6:00 PM ET**



In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a greater need for high-speed internet connections as communities turn to telemedicine. The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) 2.5 GHz Rural Tribal Window is a unique opportunity for Tribes in rural areas to directly access unassigned spectrum over their Tribal lands, subject to buildout requirements. [Read more here.](#)

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**Medicare Eligible Hospitals: Hardship Exception Application**  
**Application Deadline: Sept. 1, 2020**

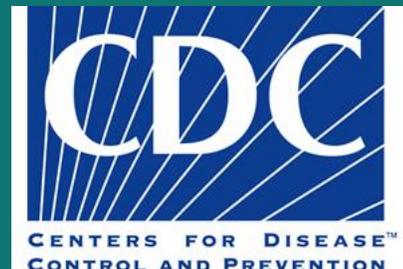
The [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services](#) (CMS) opened the hardship exception application submission period for Medicare's **Eligible Hospital (EH) Hardship Exception** to avoid the **2021** payment adjustment. EHs that utilized 2014 Certified Resource and Patient Management System (RPMS) Electronic Health Record (EHR) and were unable to demonstrate Promoting Interoperability (formerly known as Meaningful Use) in CY 2019 may need to apply for a hardship. Read the full memo [here](#).

The deadline to apply for an **EH Hardship Exceptions is Tuesday, September 1, 2020**. Please note: This deadline has been extended from the original date of July 1, 2020 due to COVID-19. Direct all inquiries to Drew Morgan [andrew.morgan@cms.hhs.gov](mailto:andrew.morgan@cms.hhs.gov) related to hardship exceptions. For IHS Specific questions related to the hardship exception, please direct all inquiries to IHS's Promoting Interoperability Team at [promotinginteroperabilityteam@ihs.gov](mailto:promotinginteroperabilityteam@ihs.gov).

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**Serious Adverse Health Events**  
**Associated with Methanol-based**  
**Hand Sanitizers**

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC) issued the following Health Alert Network (HAN) Health Advisory



on July 5, 2020. On June 19, 2020, the **U.S. Food and Drug Administration** (FDA) advised consumers not to use any hand sanitizer manufactured by “Eskbiochem SA de CV” in Mexico, due to the potential presence of methanol, a “toxic alcohol”, as an active ingredient, which can cause blindness and/or death when absorbed through the skin or when swallowed. Since then, **FDA** has identified additional ABHSR products that contain methanol and is working with manufacturers and distributors on a voluntary recall of these products. **Read more.**

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**Visit the NIHB COVID-19 Tribal Resource Center at [www.nihb.org/covid-19](http://www.nihb.org/covid-19).  
Reach the NIHB COVID-19 Response Team, contact [CWheeler@nihb.org](mailto:CWheeler@nihb.org)**

**For media inquiries, contact April Hale at [AHale@nihb.org](mailto:AHale@nihb.org)**

